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FORMER AIRPORT SCREENER CHARGED WITH STEALING CASH FROM PASSENGER BAGGAGE

WICHITA, Kan. – United States Attorney Eric Melgren announced today that **Chad Butler,** 33, Wichita, Kansas**,** was charged on August 25, 2004, by a federal grand jury in Wichita, Kansas, with one count of theft of cash by an airport screener.

Melgren said that Butler was arrested on August 26, 2004, in Wichita, Kansas, by the Transportation Security Administration, and made his initial appearance on August 27, 2004, before U.S. Magistrate Judge Karen M. Humphreys in U.S. District Court in Wichita, Kansas. Butler was released on his own recognizance. No additional court dates have yet been set.

The indictment alleges that on June 16, 2004, Butler, while employed as an airport screener with the U.S. Transportation Security Administration at Wichita Mid-Continent Airport, stole approximately $500 in U.S. currency from the baggage of a Delta Airlines passenger.

If convicted, Butler faces a maximum of one year in federal prison, without parole, and a $1,000 fine. The case was investigated by the U.S. Transportation Security Administration and is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Lanny Welch.

"Airport screeners work for the safety of airline passengers," Melgren said. "They are given access to the most private aspects of airline passengers to perform that duty. This is a position of trust. Those who are accused of abusing that trust will be vigorously investigated and, when warranted, prosecuted."

As in any criminal case, a person is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty. The charges filed merely contain allegations of criminal conduct.

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